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ABSTRACT

Parent input to administrative decisions within Southeast Alternatives (SEA) takes several forms. First, administrators often seek individual or group opinions on issues. Secondly, parents sit on advisory councils and governing boards which set policy or make recommendations. Finally, a broad base of feedback is sought through systematic interviews or surveys of all parents. This document reports the results of the third all-parent survey effort. Every parent was mailed a questionnaire packet containing six sections--one to be answered by all-parents and one from each of the SEA component schools. Parents were directed to respond to the all-parent section and to those school sections at which their children attended. In addition to responding to questionnaire sections, parents were urged to supply further comments. All parent responses were anonymous. Questionnaires were computer analyzed, except for write-in comments which were collected and included in feedback information to particular schools. Approximately 45 percent of questionnaires mailed were returned. The response data was found to be reasonably representative of SEA parent opinion.
(Author/BJG)

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SEA PARENT OPINION SURVEY - 1974
Final Report

May 30, 1974

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Written by: Dr. Roy Almen

This is an SEA Level I formative evaluation report prepared as part of the project-wide evaluation effort. Ideas expressed in the report do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Minneapolis Public School Administration nor of the Minneapolis School Board.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SOUTHEAST ALTERNATIVES

October, 1974

The Experimental Schools Program (ESP) is designed to test comprehensive change in education with the intent to facilitate the transition from research and experimentation to practice. Southeast Alternatives, one component of ESP, is dedicated to the following goals:

I. "[The project will provide] a curriculum which helps children master basic skills...."

II. "The project will test four alternative school styles (K-6) and selected options in schooling programs for grades 7-12 articulated upon the elementary alternatives."

III. "The project will test decentralized governance with some transfer of decision making power from both the Minneapolis Board of Education and the central administration of the Minneapolis Public Schools."

IV. "The project will test comprehensive change over a five year period from 6/1/71 - 6/30/76 combining promising school practices in a mutually reinforcing design. Curriculum staff training, administration, teaching methods, internal research, and governance in SEA make up the main mutually reinforcing parts."

ESP was initiated in 1971 by the United States Office of Education and is now directed by the National Institute of Education (NIE). In May, 1971 three school districts, Minneapolis Public Schools, Berkeley Unified School District of Berkeley, California and Franklin Pierce School District of Tacoma, Washington, were selected as experimental school sites. There are five major experimental school sites and 13 smaller ones as of 1974.

Southeast Alternatives, the name given to the Minneapolis Public Schools' Experimental School Project, was funded for five years. On June 1, 1971, a 27-month operation grant of $3,580,877 was made to the school district. A final 33-month contract for $3,036,722 was approved by the National Institute of Education (NIE) on May 22, 1974.

The 2,140 K-12 students in the project include a racially and economically diverse urban population. Southeast Minneapolis, bounded by factories,

flour mills, freeways, multiple dwellings, residential neighborhoods, shopping areas and railroads, also houses the main campus of the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Stately old homes, low income apartments and expensive condominiums are all located in the area. This mixture of ages, occupations, interests, and life styles supports a diversity of views about the nature of public education which the five SEA alternative schools established by parent choice reflect.

At the elementary level students may choose to attend any one of four major alternative programs:

The Contemporary School at Tuttle utilizes the graded, primarily self-contained classroom structure. The basic skills of mathematics and language are developed through an individualized multi-text, multi-media approach. Students move between their homerooms and a vareity of centers to participate in learning activities throughout the entire school day.

The Continuous Progress School in the Pratt building allows children to advance at their own speeds without regard to grade level. Children are placed in homeroom groupings according to their reading placement and spend 60% of their day in these homerooms. All subject areas are taught by the homeroom teacher. Mornings are structured with language arts, math, social studies, science, music and other curricular areas. About 40% of student time is spent in two-week interest groups which are selected by students, faculty, parents and volunteers.

The Open School at Marcy offers its students an opportunity to influence their education. An integrated curriculum which emphasizes the process approach, that of children learning how to learn, to make independent judgments and to discover their interests, is offered. Children are grouped in multi-aged "families" and a flexible daily schedule allows times for activities at various resource centers. The Marcy Community Day plan makes it possible for students to take extended trips into the city or wilderness to expand

their educational experience.

The Free School (K-12) offers a flexible curriculum which allows students to pursue the areas they wish to develop and experience with emphasis on making the curriculum relevant to present day issues and enhancing students' skills, knowledge and inner autonomy for acting as free people in an environment of rapid, almost radical change. The Free School is particularly committed to recognize and oppose racism, sexism and class oppression in today's world. Students are grouped into younger (primary), middle and older (secondary) categories. Although basic skills are stressed, and graduation requirements are set, a flexible approach is used in achieving goals.

The transitional program at Marshall-University High School has been designed to meet the needs of the diverse groups of students coming from the various SEA elementary programs. An Open classroom and a Continuous Progress classroom are available for students in 6th-8th grades. Students 11 and 12 years of age may choose to remain in their elementary school until grade 7 or enter either of the transitional programs. Graded classrooms are available to 7th and 8th graders. A.L.E., the adjusted learning environment for students with special needs, and a special reading center are also offered to Junior High students. Teachers work in teams to offer a coordinated program.

A flexible array of courses and activities are available at the High School level. Each Marshall-U student, with parental consent, designs his or her own educational program within a trimester system of twelve week courses. In addition to single discipline courses there are inter-disciplinary courses, independent study opportunities, and a variety of off-campus learning programs in the community.

Advisory/governing councils consisting of parents, faculty, staff, and sometimes students have been established at all five SEA schools. An SEA

Management Team of principals and managers of K-12 service programs share project-wide decision making with the SEA director. A project-wide board, the Southeast Council, is composed of parent and staff representatives from each school and other community representatives and serves in a strong advisory capacity to the SEA director.

A Teacher Center has been established to provide teachers with an opportunity to receive substantial in-service training as well as to provide an avenue for preservice experiences. An In-service Committee made up of teachers from the SEA schools receives proposals and acts on them, thus providing a direct role for teachers in the staff development activities. The University of Minnesota and Minneapolis Public Schools jointly operate the Teacher Center which was first initiated with federal SEA funds.

Two evaluation teams are directly involved with the SEA project. Level I (Internal) evaluators work for the Minneapolis Public Schools and are administratively responsible to the SEA director. The Level I team conducts formative evaluation activities as requested by project participants such as parents, students, faculty, administrators and the Board of Education. The purpose of this type of formative evaluation is to provide information that will be useful in developing effective educational programs and improving the project.

The Level II Evaluation team is organized by the ARIES Corporation. This external team is known as the Minneapolis Evaluation Team (MET) and is accountable directly to N.I.E. The purpose of external evaluation is to independently collect information of a summative nature about SEA which will be of use to practicing educators who are in the process of designing, implementing or operating programs to improve education.

PREFACE

Parent input to administrative decisions within SEA takes several forms. First, administrators often seek individual or group opinions on issues. Secondly, parents sit on advisory councils and governing boards which set policy or make recommendations. Finally, a broad base of feedback is sought through systematic interviews or surveys of all parents. This document reports the results of the third all-parent survey effort.

The SEA internal evaluation department serves administrators and advisory bodies in these efforts by carrying out the design, data collection, data analysis and reporting back of survey results. Much credit is due to the staff and advisory board members of each SE school and the SE council who identified issues, formulated questions and assisted in the design of the questionnaires. Their names are too numerous to mention individually but their commitment to this task helped make the questionnaires relevant. The Level I evaluation team who contributed to mailing, data processing, analysis and reporting included Thel Kocher, Gail Welsh and Roy Almen. Ruby Barber of Pratt-Motley assisted in the follow-up calling of parents. Appreciation is extended to secretaries Elizabeth Pilman and Barbara Renshaw for their typing and other services.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

A major goal of Southeast Alternatives is to encourage parent and community involvement in the educational and decision-making processes of the schools. One of the many ways school personnel and school advisory groups learn of parents' perceptions of what and how the schools are doing is through surveys or questionnaires. This report describes the results of the third all-parent survey conducted in SEA.

Motivation

The survey was encouraged by the SE Council (the all-SEA advisory body), by the parent-staff-community advisory bodies in the individual schools, and by the SEA Management Team. The internal evaluation department sought out and received the invaluable help of these groups in the formulation of questions and design of the questionnaires in an effort to obtain relevant data for their information needs.

The Instruments

Every parent was mailed a questionnaire packet containing six sections-one to be answered by all-parents, and one from each of the SEA component schools. Parents were directed to respond to the all-parent (SEA) section and to those school sections at which their child(ren) was (were) attending. Thus, there was a two-page survey form covering questions of general concern to SEA schools and parents and a two-page survey form covering issues of concern to each particular school:

1. All parent section (SEA) - 12 questions (28 variables)
2. Marshall-University High School - 13 questions (32 variables)
3. Pratt-Motley Schools - 10 questions (31 variables)
4. Tuttle School - 14 questions (37 variables)
5. Marcy School - 21 questions (21 variables)
6. Free School - 13 questions (42 variables)

The computer and analysts thus deal with 191 variables in working with the total of 83 questions.

Write-in Comments

In addition to responding to the questionnaire sections, parents were urged to write comments below items if they wished. Also, they were invited to supply further comments on the back of the cover letter and state to whom these should be sent. A total of 137 cover letters were received, many with extensive comments. Copies of the originals were forwarded to the appropriate schools or offices as directed. Information related to other comments will be included with other data in the text of Chapter 2.

Administration of the Survey

Approximately 1345 parents were sent the survey, March 15, 1974. A post-paid return envelope was provided with each. These envelopes were numerically to allow follow-up of a random sample from the entire group. All responses, however, were separated immediately from coded envelopes and not associated with parent names. All responses were thus anonymous.

Computer analysis of the data was facilitated by questionnaire formats designed for easy keypunching. Write-in comments from each questionnaire page were collected and later included in the feedback information to the appropriate schools.

Parents were appraised of the coming survey in the SEA newspaper two weeks before mail-out and by a post card one week in advance. Five days after mail-out a reminder card expressed appreciation to respondents and urged non-returners to send in completed forms. Personal help was supplied to those requesting aide in filling out the instruments.

Responses

Approximately 45 percent of the questionnaires were returned (602 of 1345). Figure 1 presents a timeline of events and returns by days over the collection period.

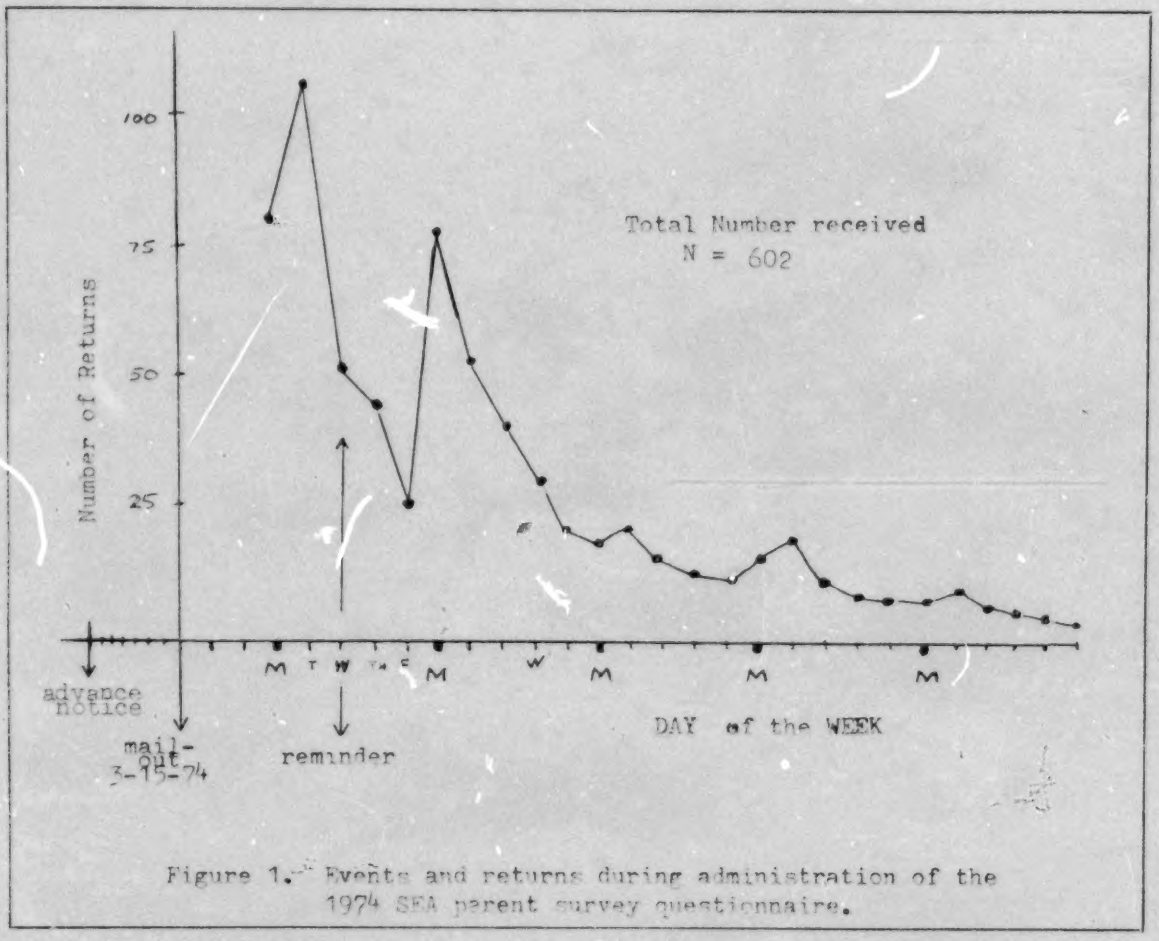

Figure 1. Events and returns during administration of the 1974 SEA parent survey questionnaire.

The overall rate of return, though not as high as the 1973 effort, is considered slightly above what might normally be expected (30-40%) in a mail-out survey of this length and difficulty.

Table 1 shows the numbers of families responding to each section of the questionnaire packet.

Table 1. Responses to the sections of the 1974 SEA Parent Questionnaire

Section	N	
All Parent (SEA)	602	A total of 1352 questionnaire sections were returned.
Marshall-University	277	
Pratt-Motley	157	
Tuttle	102	
Marcy	163	
Free School	51	

The elementary school residence area of the 602 respondents is displayed in Table 2. It reveals that a relatively large proportion (28%) of responses came from parents who said they live outside the southeast area.

Table 2. Elementary school residence area of respondents.

Residence Area	Proportion of 602 Responses
Marcy	12%
Pratt-Motley	28%
Tuttle	28%
Outside of SE	28%
(No response)	(4%)

Table 3 reveals that the children of the responding families represent from 40% to 62% of the student population of a particular SEA school and, overall, represent 47% of the SEA student population.

Table 3. Students represented by the respondents.

	% of total enrollment
Marshall-University	40% of 976
Tuttle	52% of 269
Pratt-Motley	46% of 478
Marcy	62% of 302
Free School	51% of 141
SEA overall	47% of 2166

Sampling for Representativeness

To check on the representativeness of the data received, a sample of 100 names was picked at random from the original mailing list. Repeated follow-up efforts by phone and by personal visits resulted in receipt of 65% of the sample questionnaires within the deadline specified. Comparison of sample with non-sample responses revealed statistically significant data differences on only 10 (5%) of the 190 variables in the survey. Since we would expect 5% of the differences to be significant simply by chance, it can be concluded that the overall sample is representative of the total group.

In a comparison of the 602 respondents' occupation and education data with corresponding data of respondents to the 1972 random sampling of parents (from a survey titled Listening to Parents) we note a similarity of proportions among the categories generally, but a trend toward higher educational levels in this year's respondent group.

In general, then, we conclude that the response data appears reasonably representative of SEA parent opinion and certainly of those who normally respond to schools with opinions and comments.

Conclusions from the data

For those who would like to gain a brief overview of the results before proceeding to the complete results as given in Chapter II, the next few pages contain some general conclusions which are supported by the data.

Parent Survey: All-Parent Section

Conclusions

(1) As in previous SEA parent surveys, most respondents felt they had received adequate information to enable them to make a wise choice for their children (Table 5A).

(2) More people agree that SEA is offering adequate secondary-level choices than disagree. The 1974 results also indicate less dissatisfaction than was found on the 1973 survey. The results show some differences from school-to-school (Table 5E).

(3) Nearly all parents believe that decision-making should be decentralized at least to the extent of allowing elected parent-staff groups to advise decision-makers. More than half believe that the elected group should participate directly in making decisions (Table 6A).

(4) Parents are generally more satisfied than dissatisfied with the present parent-staff governing groups/procedures. Large proportions, however, marked "Don't Know" to questions pertaining to these topics (Tables 6B, 6C, 6D).

(5) A large majority of SEA parents feel that "the quality of education in SEA schools is high". The data indicate that there is a significant relationship between parents' ratings on this question and the school(s) their child(ren) attend. Overall responses were about the same as in 1973 with both years indicating more positive attitudes than were present on the 1972 parent survey (Tables 7A, 7B).

(6) Almost all SEA parents feel that SEA is providing adequate program choices but nearly half were uncertain about the adequacy of programs to meet the needs of minority and low income students (Tables 8A, 8B).

(7) Over the three year history of the project there has been increasing agreement that, "spending federal funds in SEA schools is a worthwhile use of tax dollars" (Tables 9A, 9B).

(8) The proportions of SEA parents agreeing or disagreeing that SEA programs provide smooth transition from K through 12 were about equal. Analysis of the results by school indicated significant differences (Table 10).

(9) About half of the parents feel that, "ensuring that each student learns the basic skills of reading and math is the most important job of the school" with parents at some schools feeling more strongly about this than parents at other schools (table 11A).

(10) About half of the parents feel that, "learning in school is primarily dependent upon the teacher" with some schools' parent groups responding more positively than others (Table 12A).

(11) The large majority of SEA parents do not feel that the city-wide testing program has given them any helpful information about their child's progress (Table 14).

Marshall-University Parent Survey

Conclusions

(1) Math skills, reading and writing skills and further education after high school were rated by M-U parents as having the greatest importance to the respondents' children (Table M-U-2).

(2) About 85% of the respondents perceived their children as doing well or OK, and that their students feel their classes are great or OK (Table M-U-3).

(3) A positive increase in parent feeling of welcomeness and freedom to talk to M-U staff was noted over 1973. A similar increase in tone was noted in the feeling that students get along well with each other. Early graduation is seen as a worthwhile choice (Table M-U-4).

(4) About 50% feel well informed and 40% more feel fairly well informed about courses available, courses being taken and the child's progress in them (Table M-U-5).

(5) A majority of parents feel that the relative emphasis placed upon mathematics, reading, writing, art, music, drama and industrial arts at M-U is about right. Among the areas rated there was some feeling that the emphasis on reading, writing, speaking, college prep classes, human relations, art, music and drama is too little.

(Table M-U-6).

(6) Among six areas rated, greatest parent satisfaction was expressed with student progress reporting, the trimester system and with the variety of courses available. Least satisfaction was expressed with discipline. There was much uncertainty over progress in the transitional program and parent involvement in planning and decision-making (Table M-U-7).

(7) Although there was much uncertainty about the amount of unscheduled time available to students, most felt it was about the "right amount". A sizeable proportion of 9-12th grade parents said "too much" time was available (Table M-U-8).

(8) Choice of courses to be taken was viewed as a decision involving <u>both</u> students and parents (Table M-U-9).

Tuttle School Parent Survey

Conclusions

(1) Seventy-five percent to 90% of the responding families feel that the current emphases placed upon reading, math, physical education, social studies, human relations, woodworking and ceramics is about right. Among these areas, parents had most uncertainty about the social studies program (Table T-1).

(2) Among 12 curricular areas given overall ratings of quality, highest parent ratings went to Tuttle's reading and math programs, the physical education program and the after-school program (Table T-2).

(3) Satisfaction overran dissatisfaction by an average ratio of 16 to 1 on parent ratings of parent-teacher conferences, progress information, school news, discipline, the PTA board and the principal. Ninety-seven percent were satisfied with the overall quality of education (Table T-3).

(4) Most parents feel Tuttle students are well prepared for junior high but a large portion are uncertain. The majority are also uncertain about the junior high transitional program (Table T-4).

(5) Three of four parents agree that parents have adequate opportunity for involvement in Tuttle planning and development (Table T-5) and an even greater number indicated that they feel free to call upon school staff. (Table T-6).

(6) Conferences are most preferred among progress reporting methods and a majority find CAM reports (Comprehensive Achievement Monitoring) in math helpful or very helpful (Table T-7).

(7) Parent respondents perceived their children as happy at Tuttle, learning lots, and the expectations on them about right (Table T-8).

Pratt-Motley Parent Survey

Conclusions

(1) Almost all parents perceived that their children are happy and learning lots or some (Table PM-1).

(2) Among the 13 curricular areas evaluated, highest ratings were given to the afternoon mini-course program, the industrial arts woodshop and the reading program (Table PM-2).

(3) Parents generally expressed considerable satisfaction with seven areas of the P-M program which were rated, but there was much uncertainty about IMS math group instruction and student movement between Pratt and Motley. Parents were most satisfied with parent-teacher conferences and with the learning atmosphere (Table PM-3).

(4) Support for the IMS math program was given by a majority of respondents as in 1973 (Table PM-4) and 81% agree that P-M is doing adequately in teaching basic skills subjects (Table PM-5). Community volunteers were viewed as very important by 62% (Table PM-6).

(5) Most parents are uncertain about how well prepared Motley students are for transition to junior high and how well prepared MUHS is to continue continuous progress education (Table PM-7).

(6) Three of four parents perceived a willingness on the part of school personnel to listen to parents either always or usually. There was also a feeling of welcomeness on behalf of 90% of the respondents to talk with the staff should the need arise (Table PM-8).

Free School Parent Survey

Conclusions

(1) Parents perceive that the majority of their children at the Free School are generally happy or very happy and learning lots or learning some (Table FS-2,3).

(2) Choice of the Free School option was a decision made by both parents and students with older students having considerably more input to the decision (Table FS-4).

(3) Given the task to rank several listed educational goals, Free School parents ranked "being a creative and responsible person in a changing world" as first and "continuing efforts to influence environment" as second. Further education in college or technical school was ranked third (Table FS-5).

(4) Among four kinds of reports sent to the home, parents preferred reports on their child's progress in learning basic skills and how the child is interacting with staff and students (Table FS-6). Parents preferred a variety of ways of receiving that information but parent-teacher conferences was the most preferred method (Table FS-7).

(5) Among the five kinds of information they might get from the Free School, the largest proportion of parents chose "descriptions of activities and classes offered". Staff descriptions, group progress reports, and typical-day descriptions were next in order of preference (Table FS-8).

(6) Parents perceived that day-to-day decisions are largely made by individual staff members (Table FS-9).

(7) There were varied opinions, almost equally strong, about changes (if any) needed in the Free School Governing Board composition (Table FS-10).

(8) Satisfaction with the job the Free School is doing in twelve curricular areas outweighed dissatisfaction ratings by 2 to 1. Greatest satisfaction was expressed for the kind of job they are doing in encouraging creativity. Strong indications of satisfaction were also given to the job the Free School is doing in teaching math, developing skills of self-expression through art, music, writing, etc., helping students in the human relations area and expanding learning opportunities by using community sites and resources. Although the proportion of parents expressing satisfaction was greater than the proportion expressing dissatisfaction, Free School families were somewhat critical of the job the Free School is doing in: teaching language arts and critical thinking; promoting responsibility for one's own behavior and education; finding new and creative ways to teach basic skills; informing parents about students's progress (Table FS-12).

(9) Although the largest proportion of parents said the graduation requirements were neither too academic nor not traditional enough, an almost equal portion were uncertain (Table FS-13).

Marcy School Parent Survey

Conclusions

(1) Among reasons for choosing Marcy, 8 of 10 parents responded that it has the the philosophy and programs they like (Table M-1), and 9 of 10 parents rated the open education program provided as good or excellent (Table M-2).

(2) Marcy's emphasis on reading, math and social skills development is "about right" according to over 70% of the parent respondents (Tables M-3, M-4).

(3) Parents expressed greatest satisfaction with parent-teacher conferences and the playground facilities, and expressed most uncertainty of feeling regarding written reports of children's progress (Table M-5).

(4) Marcy parents expressed strong agreement that they feel free to talk to the staff at Marcy and just slightly less agreement that they have adequate opportunity to influence how Marcy develops. Agreement that children take advantage of opportunities offered in interest centers and that Marcy is doing an adequate job of teaching basic skills and getting along with others was also strong though somewhat weaker than for the previous two items. While the majority of parents agreed their children are learning to pursue interests in depth, disagreement to this item was quite strong. (Table M-6).

(5) About 7 of 10 Marcy parents were uncertain about how well their child were being prepared for junior high school or how well prepared M-U's Open School program is to receive Marcy students (Table M-7).

(6) Parents perceived over 90% of their children was happy at Marcy and learning lots or some (M-8 and M-9).

CHAPTER II

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey results are presented by sections, with comments where necessary, in the following order:

1. All-parent section (SEA)
2. Marshall-University section
3. Tuttle Contemporary School section
4. Pratt-Motley Continuous Progress Schools section
5. Marcy Open School section
6. Free School section

In presenting the data for ease of analysis percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, occasioning some responses to total 99 or 101 percent. Categories such as "don't know", "uncertain" and "no response", have in some cases, been combined or omitted to focus attention on the discriminating opinions.

The tables in the "all-parent section" contain data broken down by school in order that individual schools may know how the parents of the school responded to an item. One of the major purposes underlying the development of a system of alternatives is to provide programs that vary in the amount of structure and/or flexibility allowed students, staff and parents. Success in this endeavor will necessarily result in parent opinion differences from school to school on many dimensions. Any interpretations of school-to-school comparisons must certainly take this into account.

All Parent Section

Respondents' characteristics

When interpreting the results of the survey one might first ask what the respondent groups are like. The groups may be characterized by educational background and occupation as presented in Tables 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 3
Educational Background of Respondents

	MJHS		Tuttle		P/M		Marcy		F.S.		Total SEA	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Some high school or less	11%	7%	10%	7%	5%	4%	7%	1%	2%	2%	10%	5%
Finished high school	12%	22%	26%	35%	5%	12%	4%	9%	6%	4%	10%	16%
Some schooling after H. S.: voc. training or college	24%	34%	26%	38%	21%	35%	18%	38%	10%	42%	21%	36%
Four year college graduate	7%	9%	8%	4%	7%	11%	11%	13%	12%	10%	10%	11%
Some graduate work	9%	12%	7%	5%	11%	17%	4%	15%	10%	22%	8%	13%
Graduate degree	27%	11%	13%	6%	43%	18%	48%	22%	46%	20%	33%	15%
No response	7%	3%	10%	6%	9%	3%	7%	2%	14%	-	9%	4%

F = Father
M = Mother

The occupational data presented in Table 4 was obtained by using the Warner, Meeker, Eell's, Revised Scale for Rating Occupation[1] to code the occupation listed by the respondents. For ease of interpretation, categories containing small numbers of respondents have been combined. Thus, the second grouping used in this report is a combination of categories two and three in the Warner et al. scale, the third grouping is a combination of their categories four and five, and the fourth grouping is a combination of their categories six and seven. The last two groupings used in Table 4 were added to the Warner et al. scale to provide for these respondents.

Comparison of the total SEA occupational data in Table 4 with the occupational data collected from elementary student cumulative record cards and reported in the Study of Elementary Student Characteristics and Movement[2] shows no major differences. This tends to further support the assumption that the parents who responded to the survey are representative of the total SEA population.

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1. D. Miller, Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement, (New York: David McKay Co., 1964).

2. SEA, Study of Elementary Student Characteristics and Movement, (Minneapolis: SEA, 1974)

Table 4
Occupations of Respondents

	MUHS		Tuttle		P/M		Marcy		F.S.		Total SEA	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Lawyers, doctors, professors, large business, regional and division managers, CPA	24%	7%	12%	1%	31%	6%	31%	7%	24%	16%	26%	7%
Teachers, nurses, medium size business, assistant managers, accountants, salesmen	24%	24%	20%	15%	28%	27%	31%	30%	30%	26%	27%	26%
Small business, steno, secretary, skilled mechanics, bookkeepers, aides, clerks, cooks, simi-skilled workers	18%	18%	30%	15%	8%	11%	10%	12%	8%	14%	14%	15%
Unskilled factory, waitress, taxi drivers, gas station attendants	11%	5%	11%	10%	4%	3%	4%	3%	6%	-	7%	3%
Housewife, homemaker, student	2%	29%	2%	35%	3%	33%	6%	30%	6%	22%	4%	31%
Retired, disabled, unemployed	1%	1%	-	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
No response	19%	16%	25%	21%	26%	20%	18%	17%	24%	18%	21%	17%

F = Father
M = Mother

The number of "no responses" perhaps indicates that this was personal information which a sizable number preferred not to reveal.

Parent Choice-making

Parent/student choice-making is a major emphasis of the SEA project. The results of several questions dealing with matters related to this area are given in Tables 5A - 5E.

Table 5A
Did you receive enough information on the SEA schools to help you make a wise choice for your child(ren)?

	Yes	No	Not Sure	No Response
MUHS	80%	6%	8%	6%
Tuttle	89%	6%	2%	2%
P/M	84%	7%	6%	3%
Marcy	81%	8%	9%	2%
Free School	70%	16%	12%	4%
Total SEA	79%	9%	8%	4%
Total SEA- 1973	76%	13%	7%	4%

Adequacy of information was clearly indicated by the vast majority (79% overall) There were no significant differences in the way parents, grouped by schools, responded to this question. The pattern of response has been consistent over the years and indicates almost 80% of respondents feel they have adequate information.

Fifty-eight parents (10%) wrote comments stating specific needs for information: Training of teachers; less wordy and clearer explanations of differences in the schools; M-Options and curricular information; proposed changes before they are started; problems facing the schools; problems my child is having; what children are doing; child's learning characteristics and progress; more criterion progress evaluation, less comparative; guidance information, and what is needed for college entrance; philosophy, goals and methods of the schools.

Table 5B

What sources of information have been helpful to you in choosing an SEA school for your child(ren)?

	School Visit	Talks with Other Parents	School Brochures	Community Meeting	SEA Newspaper	Other*
MUHS	24%	12%	10%	8%	2%	25%
Tuttle	44%	15%	8%	6%	2%	13%
P/M	39%	21%	11%	9%	1%	13%
Marcy	36%	26%	4%	7%	-	19%
Free School	24%	28%	2%	10%	-	28%
Total SEA	32%	19%	9%	7%	1%	20%

*"other" includes: Child's visit to the schools, counselor's help, visit to SEA office, principal's transfer, talks with staff, kept in neighborhood school, parents' philosophy and knowledge of child, news media.

There were a variety of comments stating "other" sources. Many indicated a thoughtful decision had been made based upon the parents knowledges and philosophy of education, and talks with other parents or school personnel.

Several indicated that the student had much input to the choice and several mentioned location was important (neighborhood school) or their involvement in SEA planning.

Table 5C reveals that school visits, talks with parents, and other sources (see Table 5B) provided the most helpful information in choosing a school or program.

Table 5C
Which one of these has been most helpful in choosing an SEA school?

	School Visit	Talks with Other Parents	School Brochures	Community Meeting	SEA Newspaper	Other*	No Response
MUHS	24%	12%	10%	8%	2%	25%	20%
Tuttle	44%	16%	8%	6%	2%	13%	11%
Pratt/Motley	39%	21%	11%	9%	1%	13%	6%
Marcy	36%	26%	4%	7%	-	19%	-
Free School	24%	28%	2%	10%	-	28%	8%
Total SEA	32%	19%	9%	7%	1%	20%	22%

*See Table 5B for a listing of "other" choices.

The data in Table 5D indicate that surprising proportions of parents have visited several schools.

Table 5D
Schools visited by 602 respondents

46% had visited Marcy
43% had visited Pratt
39% had visited Tuttle
36% had visited MUHS
30% had visited Motley
24% had visited Free School
10% had No Response

Table 5E

The choices now offered by SEA on the secondary-level (Marshall-University and the Free School) are adequate for meeting the needs of Southeast children.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	9%	46%	11%	13%	9%	12%
Tuttle	5%	41%	16%	11%	2%	26%
Pratt/Motley	5%	23%	11%	19%	12%	30%
Marcy	3%	13%	7%	20%	24%	34%
Free School	-	38%	4%	22%	22%	14%
Total SEA	6%	31%	11%	16%	12%	25%

Agreement outweighs disagreement on this statement by 37% to 28%. A rather large proportion, however, did not respond, were neutral or were uncertain, especially among the elementary school parents. Marshall-University and Tuttle parents were much more in agreement on this (54% and 46% respectively). But Marcy Open school parents who gave an opinion were more in disagreement (57%). Pratt-Motley and Free School were also in less agreement than M-U parents but less so.

Parent Involvement

Another major commitment by SEA schools is to greater involvement of parents in decision-making processes (reviewing, planning, evaluating, prioritizing, etc.) and in educational processes as school-wide or classroom volunteers. Tables 6A to 6D present the results of items related to parent involvement.

Table 6A

To what degree should parents and staff be involved in school decision-making?

	MUHS	Tuttle	Pratt/ Motley	Marcy	Free School	Total SEA
1. An elected group should participate directly in making decisions.	43%	52%	55%	72%	70%	55%
2. An elected group should advise the administrators who make the final decisions.	38%	30%	31%	23%	22%	32%
3. No need for representative group, but concerned individuals should speak out.	12%	12%	10%	4%	8%	9%
4. Don't need parents or staff involved because administrators should do all of it.	1%	-	2%	-	-	-
5. I have no opinion.	3%	6%	2%	1%	-	4%

The choices (1) to (4) in Table 6A list degrees of involvement from maximum to minimum. Responses indicate that a majority of SEA parents desire maximal involvement of parents and staff directly in school decision-making. Marcy and Free School parents are particularly desirious of this maximal level of parent/staff involvement in decision-making while the MUHS parent group is somewhat less supportative than the total SEA group. Combining the results of choices 1 and 2 indicates that, of the overall SEA group, all but about 10% of the parents support some type of elected parent/staff group involvement in decision-making.

The data in Table 6B indicates that three-fourths of the overall respondent group are either satisfied with their current decision-making power (37%) or not sure of what that power is (39%). A sizable number (23%) felt parents should have more power. There were insignificant differences among the responses by schools on this question although Marcy parents were somewhat more satisfied than the other schools' parent groups. Twelve respondents (2%) wrote-in comments which emphasized that students should be included; that parent input needs to be variable depending on the issue and group, that the electorate (see

choice #1) should be the entire SEA parent body, that parents should have power to amend some decisions, and that some current efforts were more "tokenism". One discerning comment was this: "Community control is a complex problem encompassing not only how much power they have but also how much they exercise it and how it is exercised."

Table 6B
Are you satisfied with the amount of power parents now have in making SEA decisions?

	Satisfied	Not Sure	Should Have More	Should Have Less
MUHS	33%	40%	25%	2%
Tuttle	35%	32%	32%	1%
Pratt/Motley	33%	39%	25%	1%
Marcy	45%	34%	21%	-
Free School	32%	38%	30%	-
Total SEA	37%	39%	23%	1%

The SE council is the major governing body in SEA on which parents and staff have representation. Tables 6C and 6D present the results of questions dealing with its composition and effectiveness.

Table 6C
Representation on the SE Council is a fair combination of community and school representatives.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	5%	43%	13%	4%	2%	33%
Tuttle	2%	54%	12%	5%	1%	26%
P/M	6%	42%	16%	3%	-	32%
Marcy	5%	49%	7%	2%	2%	36%
Free School	4%	30%	10%	8%	-	48%
Total SEA	5%	43%	12%	4%	1%	35%

Larger proportions of respondents to both items were uncertain of a response but the ratio of agreement to disagreement was almost ten to one as to fairness of representation and seven to one as to the Council's effectiveness.

Further analysis of the responses by school do not show significant differences although, on the item dealing with representativeness, the Marcy

and Tuttle parent groups tended more toward agreement than the other parent groups and the Free School parents showed less agreement than the other groups. On the effectiveness issue the Tuttle group was more in agreement than other parent groups and Free School parents were less in agreement.

Table 6D
The Southeast Council has been effective in bringing community concerns to the attention of SEA administrators.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	6%	38%	15%	5%	2%	34%
Tuttle	4%	54%	13%	5%	2%	22%
P/M	7%	39%	13%	5%	1%	36%
Marcy	7%	35%	10%	4%	1%	45%
Free School	2%	30%	12%	10%	2%	44%
Total SEA	6%	37%	11%	4%	2%	37%

Parents are encouraged by SEA to become involved in the schools as classroom volunteers, aides, or service on community boards, etc. The table below reveals that approximately 40% of the respondents have volunteered time in one or more of these. Participation by elementary school respondents was greatest. Their overall figure was 49%. The experience(s) apparently were satisfying since almost everyone who had served as a volunteer said they would recommend it to others.

Table 6E
Have you ever served as a school or classroom volunteer in an SEA school?

	Yes	No	No Response
MUHS	18%	76%	5%
Tuttle	30%	61%	9%
P/M	45%	52%	3%
Marcy	65%	31%	3%
Free School	55%	40%	5%
Total SEA	40%	55%	5%

Curriculum and Instruction

Parents were asked to make an overall judgement about the quality of education provided in SEA schools. Table 7A reveals considerable agreement that, overall, high quality education is being provided by the SEA schools with over half of the total respondents choosing agree or strongly agree.

Table 7A

The quality of education in SEA schools is high.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	13%	43%	23%	10%	4%	7%
Tuttle	14%	46%	17%	10%	2%	11%
P/M	23%	46%	16%	9%	1%	5%
Marcy	19%	58%	10%	2%	-	11%
Free School	12%	42%	14%	10%	-	22%
Total SEA	16%	48%	16%	8%	2%	10%

Examination of the responses by school reveals that there is a relationship between parents' rating of quality of education in SEA schools and the school(s) their child(ren) attend.

Looking at data on similar items in the 1971 and 1973 parent survey (Table 7B) it can be noted that there is increasing agreement with statements related to quality of education provided in SEA.

Table 7B
Quality of Education in SEA (1971, 1973, 1974)

"The quality of education provided in SEA school is high".

Survey	N	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1971	500	36%	51%	13%
1973	670	59%	24%	16%
1974	590	64%	16%	10%

It is perhaps also notable that the proportion of neutral responses has decreased through the years. This may well indicate that parents have become more familar with SEA and its programs.

Parents were also asked to rate how well SEA schools are providing program choices, special programs and community education:

Table 8A
Providing an adequate range of program choices to students

	Good Job	Fair Job	Poor Job	Uncertain	Doesn't Apply
MUHS	65%	30%	1%	3%	1%
Tuttle	70%	16%	1%	5%	8%
P/M	75%	21%	1%	1%	4%
Marcy	70%	23%	1%	5%	2%
Free School	54%	32%	4%	10%	-
Total SEA	70%	22%	2%	4%	2%

Table 8B
Providing programs that meet the needs of minority and low income students

	Good Job	Fair Job	Poor Job	Uncertain	Doesn't Apply
MUHS	35%	20%	6%	28%	1%
Tuttle	52%	11%	-	19%	18%
P/M	36%	17%	4%	28%	15%
Marcy	36%	18%	5%	27%	14%
Free School	22%	18%	22%	30%	8%
Total SEA	36%	18%	5%	27%	14%

Table 8C
Providing activities for the community during late afternoon or evening hours.

	Good Job	Fair Job	Poor Job	Uncertain	Doesn't Apply
MUHS	58%	17%	3%	15%	7%
Tuttle	77%	13%	1%	2%	6%
P/M	59%	16%	4%	11%	10%
Marcy	55%	18%	4%	14%	9%
Free School	42%	18%	6%	24%	12%
Total SEA	55%	18%	4%	14%	9%

The data in Table 8A indicates that the total respondent group feels SEA is doing a good job of providing an adequate range of program choices. As indicated by the data in Table 8C the feeling is similar toward community

activities although fewer parents were able to give ratings. Table 8B shows that quite a large proportion were uncertain about that item. Those that did reply expressed a positive feeling, but considerably weaker in strength than to the other two items.

Examination of the responses to these three items by school reveals some significant differences. The proportion of parents with children at the Free School who feel that SEA is doing a good job of providing an adequate range of program choices to students (Table 8A) is quite different from any other school respondent group and from the total respondent group. However, when the good job and fair job categories are combined no major differences are evident among respondent groups.

The data in Table 8B indicate that, compared to the other respondent groups, greater proportions of Tuttle parents and smaller proportions of Free School parents believe SEA is doing a good job of providing programs that meet the needs of minority and low income students. Even when the good job and fair job responses are combined these two respondent groups stand out from the others.

Table 8C responses indicate that, as in the previous item, greater proportions of Tuttle parents and smaller proportions of Free School parents feel SEA is doing a good job of providing community activities.

Supposedly the availability of federal funds to the SEA project facilitated the development of alternative schools, allowed increased parent choice and involvement, and aided development of other promising programs and practices. Do SEA parents feel that this is worthwhile use of tax dollars? Table 9A shows that a preponderance of the 1974 respondents say yes, continuing a trend of increasing agreement over the years since 1971.

Table 9A
Worthwhileness of federal expenditures in SEA

	1971	1973	1974	
"Spending of federal funds in SEA schools is a worthwhile use of tax dollars."	62%	78%	84%	Agree
	(25%)	(13%)	(12%)	(Neutral)
	13%	7%	5%	Disagree
	500	670	590	N's

When the responses to the item are separated by school group as shown in Table 9B it can be noted that the proportions of Marcy and Free School parents strongly agreeing are quite a bit greater than the overall SEA average while the proportion of Tuttle parents so responding is much less than the average.

Table 9B
Spending federal funds in SEA schools is a worthwhile use of tax dollars.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	40%	39%	10%	4%	3%	4%
Tuttle	33%	44%	12%	2%	4%	5%
P/M	53%	36%	5%	2%	1%	4%
Marcy	69%	24%	2%	1%	-	5%
Free School	72%	18%	4%	2%	-	4%
Total SEA	50%	34%	7%	3%	2%	5%

An important goal in the SE program is to develop K-12 program continuity (age-level articulation) so that students will experience smooth transition through their elementary and secondary years. Table 10 reveals that large proportions of the respondents did not have enough knowledge or were neutral to a statement covering this goal. Of those in the total group who did venture an opinion, agreement and disagreement were virtually in equal proportions. It can also be noted that very few of the respondents in the total group responded either strongly agree or strongly disagree.

Table 10

SEA programs are coordinated well enough to insure smooth transition of students from year to year from Kindergarten through the 12th grade.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	5%	30%	15%	16%	5%	30%
Tuttle	6%	39%	14%	13%	6%	21%
P/M	6%	29%	12%	16%	6%	31%
Marcy	2%	10%	15%	26%	16%	31%
Free School	2%	24%	12%	18%	16%	4%
Total SEA	4%	25%	15%	18%	8%	30%

Analysis of the responses to this item by schools indicates that the proportion of Tuttle parents agreeing or strongly agreeing is much greater than the average proportion for SEA while the proportion of Marcy parents so responding is much less than the SEA average. Additionally, the proportions of Marcy and Free School parents responding strongly disagree was double the SEA average.

Instruction in reading, language arts and mathematics is important in the SEA schools but the amount of emphasis and instructional methods differ from school to school.

Table 11A

Ensuring that each student learns the basic skills of reading and mathematics is the most important job of the school.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	30%	28%	13%	24%	3%	2%
Tuttle	32%	41%	6%	18%	1%	2%
P/M	23%	36%	16%	22%	1%	2%
Marcy	13%	19%	13%	46%	8%	2%
Free School	14%	20%	18%	42%	6%	-
Total SEA	24%	30%	11%	29%	4%	2%

Slightly over half of the total respondents either agree or strongly agree that teaching basic skills is the most important job of the school while about one-third either disagree or strongly disagree with this emphasis.

Further analysis of the data indicates that there are significant differences in the responses to this item according to the school(s) at which the parents have children. This supports the SEA premise that parents want to be able to choose among school programs that allow for varying amounts of emphasis on the cognitive and affective aspects of education.

A longitudinal look at this issue over past p arent surveys is given in Table 11B. The data shows that 1974 agreement is similar to that of 1973 and that both agreement and disagreement appears to have risen over the life of the project. However, this may be an artifact of the decrease in the proportion of neutral responses. In fact, if the neutral responses for each year are split between agree and disagree then the proportions of agreement for the three years become 58%, 63%, and 62% respectively which does not indicate such a drastic shift in position.

Table 11B
Importance of basic skills: 1971, 1973, 1974
Opinions

	1971	1973	1974	
"Ensuring that each student learns the basic skills of reading and mathematics is the most important job of the school."	40%	58%	54%	Agree
	35%	14%	13%	(Neutral)
	25%	28%	33%	Disagree
	500	670	601	N

When parents were asked to respond to the statement, "Learning in school is primarily dependent upon the teacher, "slightly over half of the total group either agreed or strongly agreed with just over one-third choosing disagree or strongly disagree. However, examination of this data by school groups indicates that Marcy and Free School parents are about evenly split between some degree of agreement and some degree of disagreement. Addi-

tionally, the group of Tuttle parents differs quite a bit from the SEA average as far as the amount of importance they believe the teacher plays.

Table 12A
Learning in school is primarily dependent upon the teacher.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
MUHS	16%	38%	11%	28%	4%	4%
Tuttle	12%	50%	6%	25%	4%	3%
Platt/Motley	14%	41%	10%	28%	4%	3%
Marcy	8%	34%	9%	37%	11%	+
Free School	10%	34%	10%	36%	8%	2%
Total SEA	14%	38%	10%	31%	6%	3%

These results seem to indicate that parents do indeed want to be able to choose between schools that offer differing degrees of structure and, thus, teacher importance.

This statement was asked in past surveys also. The results can be compared in Table 12B. Again there seems to be a shift in feeling away from neutrality and slightly more toward disagreement than toward agreement with the statement. However, as in the previous item, if the neutral responses are considered to be split evenly between agree and disagree, then the agree percentages of 62%, 63%, and 57% for three years do not differ greatly.

Table 12B
Role of teacher in learning (1971, 1973, 1974)

"Learning is school is primarily dependent upon the teacher."

Survey	N	Agree	(Neutral)	Disagree
1971	500	46%	(34)%	20%
1973	670	55%	(15)%	30%
1974	601	52%	(10)%	37%

Communications

Tables 13A and 13B provide a look at how parents view two of the communications devices utilized by the SEA project. The data in Table 13A indicates that the vast

majority of SEA parents feel somewhat positive about the SEA Newsletter. Analysis of the data by school groups indicated no significant differences.

Table 13A
Providing interesting and informative stories in the SEA Newsletter.

	Good Job	Fair Job	Poor Job	Uncertain	Doesn't Apply
MUHS	58%	27%	5%	8%	4%
Tuttle	56%	26%	5%	5%	8%
Pratt/Motley	57%	31%	5%	4%	3%
Marcy	53%	31%	5%	6%	5%
Free School	30%	46%	12%	8%	4%
Total SEA	53%	31%	5%	6%	5%

The data contained in Table 13B shows that the total group of respondents is positive about the weekly information provided by the schools but not with the strength shown to the previous item. Analysis of the data by school group indicated significant differences with the most notable differences seeming to be for the Pratt/Motley and Free School groups.

Table 13B
Providing weekly information on what is going on in the schools.

	Good Job	Fair Job	Poor Job	Uncertain	Doesn't Apply
MUHS	36%	25%	12%	23%	4%
Tuttle	62%	19%	7%	6%	6%
Pratt/Motley	58%	31%	6%	2%	6%
Marcy	46%	25%	13%	12%	4%
Free School	26%	32%	32%	10%	-
Total SEA	46%	25%	13%	12%	4%

Test Results

SEA schools are currently involved in yearly administration of standardized tests as part of the city-wide testing program at the elementary and secondary levels. An individual child's test results are available to his parents as is assistance in interpretation of the results. In addition to this, school-wide results are published yearly in the news media. The usefulness of such data and testing programs has recently come into question. (See the internal evaluation reports entitled The Relationship of Standardized Testing To Southeast

Alternatives, Byers and Rawitsch, 1974, and Staff Survey Report, Rawitsch and Hooker.

In an attempt to provide some actual indication about how parents view the value of standardized test results, the survey included the question, "Has the city-wide standardized testing program given you any helpful information about your child's progress?" Table 14 shows that three-fourths of the total respondents replied no or were uncertain about a response. The uncertainty was relatively uniform across schools. (School results are not shown for the Free School since they have not been participating in the city-wide testing program.)

Fewer parents of Pratt-Motley and Marcy students replied yes to this question than those of Marshall-U and Tuttle. Comments related to this question revealed that a few were aware of the published school results but few had received any helpful individual information.

Table 14
Has the city-wide standardized testing program given you any helpful information about your child's progress?

	Yes	No	Uncertain or Don't know
MUHS	33%	35%	32%
Tuttle	33%	38%	28%
Pratt/Motley	20%	44%	36%
Marcy	16%	51%	33%
Total SEA	26%	41%	33%

Marshall-University Section

A total of 277 M-U questionnaires were returned. Of these, 264 reported having a total of 385 children at M-U, (5% did not supply that data). The 385 children represented were almost equally distributed among grades 7 to 12:

Table MU-1. Children of M-U respondents by grade levels.

(Proportion of 264 reporting data)

grade 7	17%	grade 10	16%
grade 8	15%	grade 11	18%
grade 9	18%	grade 12	15%

The M-U questionnaire called for responses on 32 variables grouped by similar response mode. The tables presented below preserve that grouping for compactness and for easy comparison of relative response-strengths. On most items there were no significant differences in the way parents of 7-8th grade students responded compared to the way parents of 9-12th grade students responded. Any differences are pointed out in the text.

Table MU-2. Importance of various options at M-U to the individual child at M-U. (N=385 students, 277 families.)

"How important is.....to your child"?	c/o's much	some	little	(uncertain)
A .....basic skills of mathematics	67	22	8	(3)
B .....basic skills of reading, writing, speaking	69	20	6	(4)
C .....college preparatory courses	58	20	11	(10)
D .....industrial arts, home economics, business, work programs	26	39	26	(9)
E .....alternative courses such as AWARE, OCLE, ALE	16	25	32	(27)
F .....going on to further education after high school.	68	12	6	(14)

Table MU-2 reveals that greatest importance and least uncertainty is attached to the learning of basic skills. Further education after high school shares a similar importance although more are uncertain of this. Among college prep,

occupationally oriented courses and special alternative courses, parent respondents attached greatest importance to college prep courses. However, there was considerable uncertainty as to importance of the alternative courses mentioned, perhaps because relatively fewer students are involved in them or parents do not know of them as several comments indicated. Of the write-in comments, several were very supportive of the AWARE proram at M-U.

Two other questions which were asked in 1973, as well as in the present survey, referred to how well their students were doing at M-U and how the students feel about most classes:

Table MU-3. How respondents' children are doing and their feeling toward M-U classes.

A. How well does he/she seem to be doing at M-U?	1973	1974	
	78%	88%	doing well or OK
	10%	8%	falling behind
	(12%)	(4%)	uncertain
	485	385	N Children
B. How does he/she seem to feel about most of his/her classes?	1973	1974	
	83%	84%	they're great or OK
	7%	11%	boring
	(10%)	(4%)	uncertain
	482	385	N Children

In A there is a significant positive increase in the way respondents feel about how their children are doing at M-U. In B, the data are essentially similar to last year and again reveal that over 80% of the students represented think M-U classes are great (20%) or OK (64%).

Table MU-4 displays the degree of agreement/disagreement on a variety of issues. It reveals a strong parent feeling of welcomeness and freedom to talk to the staff at M-U when there are problems or questions. This represents a significant increase in positive feeling over last year's response. The same trend appears true in 18B although there is less overall strength of agreement on it. Early graduation appears to be favored by a majority of parents in

MU4-C. Almost twice as many disagree as agree that the number of changes at M-U have been too many in a short time although a large number felt uncertain.

Table MU-4. Communication, human relations, early graduation, M-U changes

Statement (N=277)	strongly agree %	agree %	neu-tral %	dis-agree %	strongly dis-agree %	uncer-tain %
A. When problems or questions come up, I feel welcome and free to talk to the princi-pal or teachers at MU.	30 (16)	41 (50)	10 (13)	8 (13)	6 (5)	6 (3)*
B. I feel that students at MU get along well with each other.	5 (1)	36 (20)	23 (14)	17 (34)	9 (18)	10 (12)*
C. Early graduation (getting enough credits in less than 3 years) is a worthwhile choice at MU.	23	39	17	11	4	6
D. The number of changes in the educational program at MU have been too many in a short time.	7	15	22	30	11	15

*similar item on 1973 survey.

About 50% of the MU parents feel well informed and about 40% more feel fairly well informed on courses available, being taken or on their child's progress in them according to data in Table MU-5. Of these three areas, parents appear best informed on their child's progress.

Table MU-5. Keeping M-U parents informed.

"How well has M-U kept you informed about	well informed %	fairly well Inf. %	poorly informed %	(N/R) %
A. courses available	43	43	9	(5)
B. courses your son/d'r is taking	45	39	12	(5)
C. your childs progress	53	32	11	(5)

In Table MU-6 we view how respondents feel about the amount of emphasis placed on various curricular offerings at M-U.

Table MU-6. Curricular Emphases.

How do you feel about the amount of emphasis on these at M-U?	too Much %	about right %	too little %	(uncertain) %	N = 277.
A. Mathematics	1	69	21	(10)	
B. Reading, writing, speaking	1	51	39	(9)	
C. College prep. classes	2	38	26	(34)	
D. Industrial arts, business, home economics, work programs	3	62	12	(24)	
E. Alternative programs such as AWARE, OCLE, ALE, Urban Arts	7	45	9	(39)	
F. Art, Music, drama	2	53	22	(24)	
G. Extra curricular activities	3	40	18	(39)	
H. Getting along with people	5	48	24	(17)	
1973	(8)	(41)	(34)	(17)	

Parents are least uncertain in their feelings about basic skills instruction, and although the majority say the emphasis is about right, more say too little emphasis is placed upon reading, writing and speaking than on math. Among the other areas, the largest proportion continued to say "about right emphasis". However, art, music, drama, college preparatory classes and human relations were areas in which there was some feeling of "too little emphasis". In no area did the "too much" response outweigh the "too little" response choice.

In the area of human relations (#H) a difference was noted from the 1973 response: more now seem to feel that the current emphasis is about right.

Satisfaction with six general school matters is displayed by the data in Table MU-7. Parent satisfaction is greatest with M-U's methods of reporting student progress, the trimester system, and with the variety of courses available. Least satisfaction was expressed with the discipline at M-U with almost as many

expressing some degree of dissatisfaction as some degree of satisfaction. Though most expressed more satisfaction than dissatisfaction with M-U's progress in providing alternatives in the transitional (7th - 8th) program and with the amount of parent involvement in planning and decision-making, a large proportion were uncertain about a response in these two areas. The responses to question B are similar to those made on the 1973 survey.

Table MU-7. Parent Satisfaction.

"How satisfied are you with the following at M-U"?	very satis-fied	satis-fied	dis-satis-fied	very dis-satis-fied	uncer-tain
	%	%	%	%	%
A. Discipline	8	36	25	14	17
B. Methods of reporting progress (1973)	25	52 (68)	12	6 (21)	5 (11)
C. The trimester system	23	56	3	2	17
D. Variety of courses	19	58	13	2	8
E. Progress in providing alternatives in the transitional program	10	45	8	5	32
F. Amount of parent involvement in planning and decision-making	6	37	12	8	37

(N = 277)

Table MU-8 presents data regarding parent's feeling about the amount of unscheduled time available to M-U students. Overall, about 30% were uncertain how to respond to the question, and though most of the remainder felt that about the right amount of unscheduled time is available to M-U students, a sizeable proportion of 9-12 grades parents said "too much" was available.

Table MU-8. Unscheduled student time.

	7-8	9-12	grade level
How much unscheduled time do you feel is available to M-U students?	7%	29%	too much
	47%	45%	about right
	5%	4%	not enough
	42%	22%	uncertain
	63	214	N

Table MU-9 presents data on an important aspect of choice-making at M-U.

Table MU-9. Who should choose student's courses.

"Who should have the most to say about what courses the student takes?"	26%	the student
	1%	his parents
	5%	counselor
	56%	student and parents
	5%	other
	2%	uncertain

The choices, student and parents or the student himself rank first and second in order of preference. Most "other" entries stated student, parents and counselor should be involved. The latter perhaps could have been the most popular choice if it had been included. At any rate, the data show the importance of a joint decision.

Parent Comments

M-U parents were invited to comment on the questionnaire if they desired. About 21% of the respondents wrote a total of 94 comments related to items on the questionnaire. Transcripts of the actual comments have been delivered to the school for staff study.

Tuttle Section

The Tuttle questionnaire contained 38 questions. A total of 102 families returned questionnaires. These accounted for a combined total of 139 children, or 52% of Tuttle's student population.

Questions were grouped in common response modes and required parent evaluations of curricular emphases, of curricular quality, satisfaction with various aspects of the program, affect on children, communication and progress reporting. These groupings are retained in this report for ease of data presentation.

Curricular Emphases

According to the data presented in Table T-1, 75% to 90% of the parents feel the current emphasis placed on each of the selected areas is about right. This feeling is strong and consistent over all categories. There was more uncertainty about the social studies and ceramics (pottery) emphasis, perhaps because parents have less knowledge about them.

Table T-1. Evaluation of curricular emphases.

"How do you feel about the amount of emphasis on the following?" (N=102)	too much %	about right %	too little %	Uncertain %
A. Basic skills: reading, language arts	3	85	8	(4)
B. Basic skills: mathematics	1	85	7	(7)
C. Learning about self and how to get along with others	3	85	10	(2)
D. Social studies	2	75	6	(18)
E. Woodworking	7	83	3	(7)
F. Ceramics (pottery)	7	81	2	(10)
G. Physical education	3	91	5	(1)

Curricular Programs Rated

Twelve programs were given overall ratings of quality and the results in Table T-2 indicate, in general, that a large majority feel the programs are either excellent or good. There was most uncertainty as to how to rate the evening community school, the guidance and counselling program, industrial arts, the media center and the social studies program, perhaps because these are lesser known. Strongest ratings were to Tuttle's reading and math programs, the physical education program and the after-school program. Although the music and art programs also received a majority of excellent or good ratings, it was the one item which received the largest number of "poor" ratings.

Table T-2. Ratings on curricular programs at Tuttle.

"Overall, how do you rate these programs at Tuttle School?" (N=102)	excellent %	good %	OK %	poor %	very poor %	uncertain %
A. Reading program	58	32	3	-	1	(6)
B. Mathematics	45	42	4	1	-	(9)
C. Social studies program	11	50	20	-	-	(20)
D. Science program	15	45	21	1	1	(18)
E. Music and art	14	37	19	10	5	(16)
F. Ceramics	21	49	18	-	-	(10)
G. Industrial arts	13	47	14	-	-	(27)
H. Physical education	24	56	13	1	-	(6)
I. Media center and its use	32	37	10	1	-	(21)
J. After school program	35	43	9	3	-	(11)
K. Evening community school	17	38	10	1	-	(35)
L. Guidance and counselling program	13	28	20	2	2	(36)

The strength of positive response shown in the previous tables continues in the parent satisfaction ratings displayed in Table T-3. Among the areas identified, parents felt greatest uncertainty of response in rating the PTA board's accomplishments, the principal and his work, and the way discipline is handled. The ratio of satisfaction to dissatisfaction over all categories was high (about 16:1). It was greatest for the overall quality of education provided and for Tuttle's school-home communication efforts. "Information received on child's progress" and "discipline procedures" received the lowest satisfaction ratings among those listed but they were still high ratings.

Table T-3. Parent satisfaction with program aspects.

"How satisfied are you with the following at Tuttle?"	very satisfied	satisfied	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	uncertain
	%	%	%	%	%
A. Parent-teacher conferences	55	38	3	1	(3)
B. Efforts to "let us know what's going on"	54	43	2	1	(2)
C. Information received on my child's progress	35	54	9	1	(1)
D. The principal and his work	43	41	3	-	(14)
E. Overall quality of education provided	49	48	1	-	(3)
F. Work accomplished by the PTA board	33	48	2	-	(18)
G. The way discipline is handled at Tuttle	35	43	7	4	(11)

In Table T-4, data on questions related to the transition students face in going from Tuttle to junior high reveal that a large proportion of parents are uncertain of a certain response to either question. In A however, there is a significant increase over 1973 in how respondents feel on the preparedness of Tuttle students for junior high.

Table T-4. Transition to junior high.

		1973	1974
A. How well prepared are Tuttle students for junior high?	well prepared	16%	35%
	OK	24%	22%
	poorly prepared	13%	4%
	uncertain	(46)	(40)
	N=	123	102

		1974
B. In your opinion how well-prepared is M-U to receive Tuttle Students?	well prepared	9%
	OK	16%
	poorly prepared	7%
	uncertain	(59%)

Parent Involvement

Table T-5 reveals that three out of every four respondents indicated agreement with a statement related to adequacy of parent involvement in Tuttle planning and development.

Table T-5. Parent influence in development.

"Parents have adequate opportunity to influence how Tuttle develops and grows."	Strongly agree	26%	74%
	Agree	48%	
	Neutral	16%	
	Disagree	3%	4%
	Strongly disagree	1%	
	(Uncertain)	(7%)	

In another statement, parents' strong agreement indicated their feeling of welcomeness and freedom to approach the staff with problems and questions at any time (see Table T6A). The strength of this feeling is essentially similar to that shown in 1973.

Table T-6. Home to school communications

		1973	1974
A. When problems or questions come up, I feel welcome and free to talk to the principal and teachers at Tuttle.	Strongly agree	55%	62%
	Agree	39%	34%
	Neutral	2%	4%
	Disagree	2%	1%
	Strongly disagree	0	-
	(Uncertain)	(2)	(-)
	N =	123	102

	1974	
B. How much do you know about the Wednesday morning parent meetings at Tuttle School?	27%	I've attended
	70%	Know of it but have not attended
	4%	Have not heard of it
	-	No response

From comments related to T-6B, a number of parents would like to attend Wednesday morning parent meetings but are unable to come. Most know of it and the overall turn-out has been worthwhile.

As indicated by the data in Table T-7A, the most preferred type of progress report at Tuttle is the parent-teacher conference. Letter grades and written discriptions followed in equal preference. From Table T-7B, we note that the Comprehensive Achievement Monitoring computerized system of recordkeeping and reporting which provides a periodic "student coupon" report was found helpful by a majority of parents.

Table T-7. Progress reporting to parents.

A. What type of report do you most prefer on your child's progress? (other includes: comparisons with other children, what needs improvement, combination of above.) N = 102	conference with teachers	40%
	better grades (A,B,C,D,)	21%
	written descriptions	20%
	percentage grades	7%
	check list	4%
	other	5%
	uncertain	3%
B. (For parents with children in grades 3-6): How do you rate the CAM "student coupon" report on math progress? N = 102	very helpful	16%
	helpful	40%
	little help	12%
	no help	5%
	uncertain	28%

Effect of Program on Students

As revealed by data in Table T-8, a very high percentage of parents perceive their 139 children as being very happy or generally happy, learning lots, that the amount of work expected is about right, and that the work is about right. As can be seen in 8A and 8B, these data continue a very positive report from parents and represent an increase over 1973 ratings.

Table T-8. Program Effect on Students.

		1973	1974
A. How happy is each child at Tuttle?	very happy	48%	52%
	generally happy	45%	46%
	indifferent	5%	2%
	unhappy	2%	-
	very unhappy	-	-
	N=	177	139

		1973	1974
B. How much is your child learning at Tuttle?	Learning lots	72%	78%
	some	20%	21%
	falling behind	5%	1%
	falling far behind	1%	-
	N=	177	139

C. Is the work at Tuttle...	6%	too easy
	-	too difficult
	93%	about right
	1%	No response

D. Is the amount of work expected of him/her....	7%	too much
	-	too little
	92%	about right
	1%	no response

Tuttle Parent comments

Finally, Tuttle parents were requested to write out their comments, changes or additions desired. A total of 98 comments were supplied by 48 of the 102 respondents. These comments were directed to a number of areas as indicated.

Table T-9. Parent write-in comments: Categories.

	% of 98 comments
1. Curriculum, curric. organization	32%
2. Communication, progress reporting	23%
3. Discipline, human relations; guidance	10%
4. Personnel: teachers, aides	10%
5. Affect on parent or child	21%
6. Transition to jr. high, facilities, parent involvement and other	4%

Pratt-Motley Section

The 157 respondents to this section are parents of 218 children at the schools. Of these 218 children, 57% attend Pratt and 43% are students at Motley. The number from each school represents 46% of each school's total student population.

Parents were asked their perceptions of their child(ren)'s progress and each child's overall reaction to the schools:

Table PM-1. Parent perception of learning progress and child's happiness with school.

		1974		1973
A.	How much does each child seem to be learning at Pratt/Motley?	62%	learning lots	49%
		35%	learning some	45%
		1%	falling behind	3%
		1%	falling far behind	-
		(1%)	uncertain/can't tell	(20%)
		218	N	251
		1974		1973
B.	How happy is each child at Pratt/Motley?	41%	very happy	30%
		54%	generally happy	62%
		2%	indifferent	4%
		2%	unhappy	3%
		-	very unhappy	-
		(1%)	uncertain/can't tell	(1%)

Table PM-1 reveals that parents perceive their children at Pratt-Motley are learning. They said 62% were learning lots and 35% were learning some. Their feelings were also quite positive with regard to how happy these children are at Pratt-Motley. On both questions there is a notable increase in the positive direction in the way parents responded this year as compared to last year. There was no significant difference between the way Pratt children were rated compared to Motley.

Thirteen curricular areas of the schools were evaluated by the parents and the results appear in Table PM-2. Parents generally gave high ratings to all of the areas but there was considerable uncertainty of response to the following programs (in order of uncertainty):

(1) use and effectiveness of volunteers
(2) music program
(3) science program
(4) social studies
(5) guidance in human relations among students
(6) involving parents in decision-making.

The levels of uncertainty in (2) to (5) may be due to the fact that many of the children are not involved in them. Also, many students may not be fully informed about what is happening in area (1) and (6).

Parents gave highest ratings to these programs:

(1) special interest courses (mini-courses)
(2) industrial arts woodshop
(3) continuous progress reading program.

Bus transportation and after-school programs are not used by everyone but the response was favorable to both, particularly to the after-school program.

There were no significant differences between the way Pratt parents responded and the way Motley parents responded on these 13 items.

Write-in comments generally supported the positive tone of the data in Table PM-2.

Table PM-2. Parent evaluation of Pratt-Motley curriculum.

How good a job is P-M doing in these areas?	excel-lent	good	OK	poor	very poor	uncer-tain	
A. Continuous progress reading program	36	38	12	2	2	(10)	
B. IMS Math Program	22	31	23	5	2	(16)	
C. Interest program (mini-courses)	45	31	12	2	1	(9)	
D. Involving parents in decision-making	15	39	22	3	1	(20)	
E. Music program	9	21	22	11	1	(35)	
F. Art program	16	38	19	1	2	(21)	
G. Social Studies	14	41	16	1	1	(27)	
H. Science	11	34	16	6	2	(31)	
I. Industrial arts (woodshop)	38	36	13	2	0	(11)	
J. Guidance given students in getting along with each other	20	35	15	5	3	(23)	
K. Bus transportation	12	29	23	6	3	(28)	(28*)
L. After school program	10	19	6	0	1	(64)	(64**)
M. Use and effectiveness of volunteers	18	34	11	3	1	(34)	

* do not use bus
** not enrolled

N = 157 respondents

Parent satisfactions with the seven continuous progress program aspects as displayed in Table PM-3 continue this same positive tone of response. The data indicate also that there is much uncertainty in response or lack of knowledge about:

(1) the amount of group instruction in IMS math
(2) student movement within and between Pratt and Motley
(3) continuous progress principles applied to the kindergarten program.

Parents are most satisfied with their conferences with teachers and with the schools' efforts to provide a positive learning atmosphere for students. There was lesser satisfaction with written progress reports and discipline procedures. Nevertheless, high ratings prevailed in those areas also.

Table PM-3. Parent satisfaction with aspects of Pratt-Motley Program.

How satisfied are you with the following at P-M school?	very sat-isfied	sat-isfied	dissat-isfied	very dissat-isfied	uncer-tain
A. Parent-teacher conference	41	47	7	1	(5)
B. Written reports on your child's progress	22	41	16	7	(14)
C. Discipline procedures	15	44	18	5	(18)
D. Amount of group instruction in IMS math	7	30	11	4	(49)
E. Student movement within and between Pratt-Motley	11	36	7	3	(40)
F. Efforts to provide a positive learning atmosphere for students	41	43	8	1	(7)
G. Efforts to provide continuous progress education for 5 year olds. (Pratt respondents only)	20	32	2	0	(46)

N = 157 respondents

A majority of Pratt-Motley parent respondents (53%) evaluated the IMS math program as either excellent or good (refer to Table PM-2B.) In Table PM-4, below, a majority of parents again reveal support for the IMS math program in 1974. The 1973 figures and 1974 figures are essentially similar.

Table PM-4. IMS math program continuance.

The IMS math program should be continued at Pratt-Motley.	1973	1974
strongly agree	22%	26%
agree	41%	26%
neutral	11%	13%
disagree	4%	5%
strongly disagree	3%	5%
(uncertain)	(18%)	(25%)
N =	205	157

In Table PM-5 another evaluation of the reading and mathematics program is presented. It shows that 81% of the respondents agree that Pratt-Motley is doing an adequate job of teaching basic skill subjects and that only 5% disagree.

Table PM-5. Evaluation of basic skills teaching.		
"Pratt-Motley is doing an adequate job of teaching basic skills subjects."	Strongly agree	31%
	agree	50%
	neutral	9%
	disagree	4%
	Strongly disagree	1%
N=157	(Uncertain)	(4%)

The importance of community volunteers to the Pratt-Motley program was underscored by the respondents. Table PM-6 illustrates that a sizeable proportion (18%) were not sure of a response but the remainder were cognizant of the importance of volunteers who teach minicourses or aid instruction in a variety of ways.

Table PM-6. Importance of community volunteers.		
How important are community volunteers to the Pratt-Motley schools?	62%	very important
	19%	some importance
	1%	no importance
	18%	Uncertain

The smoothness of transition that students experience as they go from the continuous progress K-6 program to junior high in SEA is of concern to parents. The data in Table PM-7 reveals much uncertainty on the part of parents as to how well prepared M-U (or the Free School) is to continue the CP program and as to how well Motley students are prepared for the change to one of those schools. The latter data are similar to 1973 parent responses on this question.

Table PM-7. Transition to junior high.

	1974		1973
A. How well are the students at Motley prepared for the change to the Free School or Marshall-University? (Motley parents only)	12%	Well prepared	10%
	20%	OK	27%
	16%	poorly prepared	15%
	51%	uncertain	47%

B. How prepared is MUHS to continue Motley students Continuous Progress program?	1%	Very prepared
	13%	Somewhat prepared
	6%	Somewhat unprepared
	9%	Very unprepared
	70%	uncertain

The effectiveness of school-home communications is a concern of school staff. The data below deals with two issues related to this concern:

Table PM-8. School - home communications.

A. How often does Pratt-Motley listen to parents on matters of concern to parents?	32%	Always
	43%	Usually
	1%	Seldom
	0%	Never
	24%	Uncertain

		1973	1974
B. When problems or questions come up I feel welcome and free to talk to the principal and teachers.	Agree	93%	91%
	Neutral	3%	3%
	Disagree	3%	2%
	Uncertain	(1%)	(4%)

We note a continuing trend 1973 to 1974 in overwhelming agreement among parents that they feel free and welcome to seek out school personnel when the need arises. Also, 75% of the responses perceived a willingness on the part of school staff to listen to parents always or usually.

Pratt-Motley Parent Comments

Finally, parents were asked to write out any comments, changes or additions which they have or would like to see made in the continuous progress schools. About 60% of the 157 respondents exercised this option and wrote from one to as many as eight comments each. Approximately 200 comments were written by 97 parents:

In general, parents were perceptive and discriminating, critical in many cases but at least as positive as negative in many of their comments. Table PM-9 outlines the areas of concern and the proportion of comments in them. The actual comments have been delivered to school personnel in a separate document.

Most comments pertained to curriculum (what is taught) (42%) and the organization of curriculum, time etc. (20%). Progress reports (and other communications) and discipline were areas of lesser concern in terms of the number of comments received.

Table PM-9. Parent comments: Comment categories.

	% of total
(1) Curriculum: what is taught.	
- Reading program	5%
- IMS Mathematics program	15%
- other (art, music, science)	22%
(2) Organization: of school, time, etc.	20%
(3) Discipline: guidance, behavior, modif., relations	13%
(4) Progress Reports: conferences, written, communication	11%
(5) Transition to junior high	5%
(6) Personnel: teachers, aides	3%
(7) Facilities: playground, other	3%
(8) Transportation. busing	3%
N =	201

Marcy Section

One hundred sixty-three families responded to the Marcy section. Their children, numbering 197, represent 62% of the student population. The age distribution of these children is as follows:

	N
5-8 years old	108
9-12 years old	89
	197

Choice of Marcy School

Table M-1 reveals that the reasons for choosing Marcy are quite similar to the responses offered in the 1973 survey. Eight of ten chose it because it has the kind of program and/or philosophy desired for their child(ren). "Other" responses include references to a comfortable atmosphere, availability of tutoring, amount of structure provided, and the fact that the child liked it. Ease of getting to a neighborhood school is a very minor reason - most children at Marcy are bused in from many neighborhoods.

Table M-1. Reasons for choosing Marcy.

"Which reason was most important to you in choosing Marcy School?"	1973 %	1974 %
Has program or philosophy we like.	81	79
Easy to get there.	5	3
Like the teachers.	4	6
Like the way discipline is handled.	1	1
Child's friends go there.	2	2
Other reasons.	7	9
N=	132	163

An overall parent rating of how well Marcy provides an open education to children is depicted in Table M-2. There is strong positive feeling that Marcy teachers are doing well in that respect. Eighty-nine percent of the parents rated them as doing either a good or excellent job. This feeling is almost identical to that expressed in 1973.

Table M-2. Overall Rating of Marcy's Open Education Program.			
"Marcy teachers are providing my child(ren) an open education which is..."	Excellent	36%	N=163
	Good	53%	
	Fair	8%	
	Poor	2%	
	Uncertain	1%	

Parent responses in Tables M-3 and M-4 are also very similar to those of 1973, and reveal general satisfaction with the amount of emphasis on basic skills and human relations teaching. However, of the two areas, the feeling is somewhat stronger that the emphasis on basic skills is too little compared to being too much. (Among Marcy parents in the random follow-up sample the feeling tends stronger in that direction.) In both areas there is a slight shift in feeling since 1973 toward a greater satisfaction in the amount of emphasis but also toward increased uncertainty. Data on parents' responses about the adequacy of basic skills teaching (see Table M-6) is similar in tone to the data in Table M-2.

Table M-3. Basic Skills Emphasis.			
		1973	1974
"Marcy's emphasis on basic skills (reading, math, language arts) is..."	...too much	2%	1%
	...about right	68%	71%
	...too little	23%	15%
	(uncertain)	(6%)	(13%)
	N =	132	163

Table M-4. Human Relations Emphasis.

		1973	1974
"Marcy's emphasis on learning how to get along with others is..."	too much	4%	2%
	about right	85%	82%
	too little	7%	10%
	(Uncertain)	5%	6%
	N =	132	163

Parent Satisfactions

The extent of Marcy parent satisfaction/dissatisfaction with five aspects of the open school program is displayed in the data of Table M-5.

Table M-5. Parent Satisfaction Ratings.

"How satisfied are you with...? (N=163)	very satisfied	satisfied	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Uncertain
	%	%	%	%	%
A. the way discipline is handled at Marcy.	19	57	10	2	12
B. the parent-teacher conferences	31	47	12	4	6
C. the written reports on your child's progress	10	24	17	10	39
D. the way teacher and student set learning goals.	17	52	15	3	14
E. Marcy's completed playground	66	29	1	1	4

Overall, satisfaction ratings outnumber dissatisfaction on the average about 5 to 1. Among the areas, the strongest feeling of satisfaction is expressed for the playground. The least satisfaction was expressed for the written reports on student progress, but a larger portion were uncertain about how to respond to that item. Parent-teacher conferences and discipline procedures receive high ratings also. There is somewhat less satisfaction expressed with the way teachers and students set learning goals. With reference to written reports many write-in comments asked, "What reports?".

Table M-6 Marcy Parents' Evaluations of Program Aspects

"Indicate strength of agreement or disagreement with these statements: ..." (N=163)	strongly agree	agree	neu-tral	disagree	strongly disagree	uncer-tain
	%	%	%	%	%	%
A. My child(ren) take(s) advantage of opportunities offered in interest centers.	22	53	9	8	3	5
B. My child(ren) is (are) learning to pursue interests in depth at Marcy.	16	35	15	20	5	10
C. When presented with several choices, my child(ren) is (are) learning to make wise choices.	17	52	12	6	1	12
D. When problems or questions come up, I feel welcome and free to talk to the principal and teachers at Marcy.	64 (48)	29 (42)	5 (3)	1 (5)	2 (1)	- (1)*
E. Parents have adequate opportunity to influence how Marcy School develops and grows.	37	47	8	2	3	4
F. Marcy is doing an adequate job of teaching the basic skills.	24	55	6	5	1	10
G. Marcy is doing an adequate job of teaching children how to get along with others.	26	55	6	6	2	6

*1973 data N=130

Several statements covering various aspects of the program were posed to ascertain parents' levels of agreement or disagreement. From these levels we may obtain their positive or negative feelings. Among the seven evaluations, the most positive response concerned parents' feeling welcome and free to talk to Marcy staff in the event of problems or questions. The feeling was similar to that of 1973.

Parents also feel strongly that they have adequate input to Marcy planning and development (M-6E) and that Marcy is doing an adequate job of teaching basic skills and human relations (M-6F and M-6G).

Among the statements, parents were most uncertain about whether their children were learning to make wise choices. Although strength of agreementwas twice that of disagreement in M-6B, "learning to pursue interests in depth" received the least positive ratings among the seven statements.

Transition to Junior High

Two questions dealt with transition of Marcy students to M-U or the Free School. Data in Table M-7 indicate that a majority of parents are not certain about how well Marcy students are prepared for the change or how well prepared M-U's open school program is to meet the needs of Marcy Students. Comparing 1973 data with 1974 in M-7A, we note an increase in the number of parents who respond, "I'm uncertain", and a decrease in the proportion who say Marcy students are poorly prepared. Parents of intermediate age children (9-12 years) feel more strongly that their children are being well prepared - 41% say well prepared or OK compared to only 30% of parents of primary age children. Several write-in comments stated a desire for a K-12 open school.

Table M-7. Transition to Junior High School.

		1973	1974
A. How well are Marcy students being prepared for Marshall-U or the Free School?	Well prepared	9%	9%
	OK	25%	21%
	Poorly prepared	12%	1%
	Don't know	54%	69%
	N =	130	163
B. How well prepared is the Marshall-U Open School program to meet the needs of students coming from Marcy?	Well prepared		1%
	OK		9%
	Poorly prepared		24%
	Don't know		66%

Effect of Marcy on Children

Parents' perceptions of their children's happiness with Marcy School is revealed in Table M-8. Respondents provided these ratings on 197 children (62% of the Marcy population):

Table M-8. Parents' Perception of Child's Happiness at Marcy School.

		1973	1974
"How happy is each child of yours at Marcy?	Very happy	48%	50%
	Generally happy	46%	42%
	Indifferent	4%	4%
	Unhappy	2%	3%
	Very unhappy	--	1%
	N =	167	197

As in 1973, over 90% were reported as either very happy or generally happy with Marcy School.

This same positive rating continues in Table M-9. Again, over 90% of the respondents perceived their children as learning lots or learning some. As in 1973, very few children were seen as experiencing failure to progress.

Table M-9. Parent Perception of Child's Learning Progress at Marcy School.

		1973	1974
"How much does your child seem to be learning at Marcy?"	Learning lots	42%	50%
	Learning some	50%	40%
	Can't tell	6%	7%
	Falling behind	2%	3%
	Falling far behind	--	--
	N =	165	197

Parent Comments to Marcy

Finally, the Marcy questionnaire asked parents to comment and to give changes or additions they would like to see. Of the 163 respondents, 93 (57%) wrote a total of 174 comments, many quite extensive in length. Comments were both positive and negative. The 174 comments were categorized (proportions appear in Table M-10) and sent to the Marcy staff for their use.

Table M-10. Categories of Marcy Parent Comments.

	% of 174
(1) Curriculum: what is taught	20%
(2) Organization of programs, instruction	17%
(3) Communications, progress reporting	17%
(4) Affect of Marcy program on parent, children	14%
(5) Discipline, guidance, human relationships	10%
(6) Personnel: teachers, aides, volunteers	8%
(7) Facilities at Marcy	7%
(8) Parent involvement	4%
(9) Transition to junior high	3%

Free School Section

Although the Free School section contained only 13 questions, many of them required consideration of preferences and ranking of choices. These tend to be relatively time-consuming tasks. Nevertheless, 51 families returned completed questionnaires. These families had 73 children at the Free School representing 52% of the student body:

Table FS-1. Free School Students Represented by the Responding Families.

	N	% of Enrollment
Elementary ages 5-12	39	28%
Secondary ages 13-18	34	24%
	73	52%

Parents were asked to judge how happy their children were at the Free School and how much each child seemed to be learning. Tables FS-2 and FS-3 present their responses and those of 1973.

Table FS-2. Parent Perception of Child's Happiness at the Free School.

"Is the child happy at the Free School?"	1973	1974
Very happy	29%	17%
Generally happy	60%	69%
Indifferent	6%	11%
Unhappy	5%	3%
Very unhappy	--	--
(N Children)	77	73

As in the previous year, a larger proportion of the responding parents perceive their children as either generally happy or very happy; 86% of the children were in these categories. While there do appear to be slight shifts statistically, the differences from 1973 to 1974 are not significant. Caution must also be taken in making comparisons between 1973 and 1974 data since different children may be involved.

Table FS-3. Parent Perception of How Much the Child is Learning.

"How much does your child seem to be learning?"

	1973	1974
Learning lots	30%	28%
Learning some	43%	42%
Can't tell	7%	15%
Falling behind	18%	14%
Falling far behind	3%	1%
N =	74	73

Free School Choice

The decision to attend the Free School was largely a choice made by parent and student or by the student with parent approval (see Talbe FS-4). The amount of input to that choice appears to be a function of age with older students having increased input to the choice. In no case reported did the student make the choice alone.

Table FS-4. How Free School Choice Was Made.

	Elementary	Secondary
By parents alone	17%	4%
By parents and student	65%	50%
By student with parent approval	17%	46%
By student without parent approval	--	--

Free School Goal Rankings

Although the Free School aims to prepare students for a number of things, parents were given five goals (and a sixth write-in goal) to rank in order of importance. The results below indicate that "preparing students to be creative and responsible persons in a rapidly changing world" is a first-priority goal. A somewhat related goal, "preparing students that they might go out and continue to influence his/her environment" ranked second. A number of the 17 "other" goals supplied by parents seemed to be stating aims also related to the idea of responsible citizenship. They stated such things as:

- knowing self and others
- learning to work cooperatively with others
- learn to accept and understand differences in others
- learning to live with all people equally
- acquire skills necessary to be free and independent
- learn how to manage in a stable, no-growth economy
- ability to fulfill your needs and acquire bread

"Further education beyond high school ranked third in importance as a goal toward which Free School students should be prepared.

Getting a good job after high school and other concerns ranked fourth and fifth. "Other" goals supplied by parents included references to personal characteristics and curriculum emphases:

- learn to value self
- being self-confident and self actualizing
- develop self-confidence
- be adaptable, to survive, able to roll with the punches
- love learning for its own sake
- become a lifelong learner

- learn to be self-sufficient and self-supportive in most enjoyable way
- learn basics of history, literature, humanities
- stress visual and performing arts.

One parent commented significantly that education which prepares a student to be a creative and responsible person must necessarily include education which prepares a student to be an influence on the environment and includes education which prepares a student for either college or a job consistent with the individual's needs and talents.

Table FS-5. Educational Goal Rankings.

	Votes	Rank
A. Being a creative and responsible person in a rapidly changing world.	32%	1
B. Continuing efforts to influence his/her environment.	22%	2
C. Further education in a college, technical school or university.	19%	3
D. Getting a good job after high school.	14%	4.5
E. Other	13%	4.5

Reports to Home

Responding parents indicated that they desire most to receive reports from the Free School on basic skills progress of their child and information about how the child interacts with the staff and other students. Table FS-6 further reveals that descriptions of the child's classes and activities and what can be done at home to reinforce learning are equal second choices. "Other" kinds of information desired as supplied by parents were these:

- what things child has done
- child's interest level in visual and performing arts
- whether child is aware of or falls into racist/sexist behavior
- reports on other skills besides basics
- reports on attendance
- how the child feels about self in the school environment
- whether the child is developing his/her full capabilities
- how staff sees child's levels of self-understanding, self-confidence, and self-sufficiency
- teacher's view of personality growth.

Table FS-6. Progress and Other Reports to Home.

What descriptive reports do you want from the Free School about your child? Rank the following:	Votes	Rank
A. A report on his/her progress in the basic skills (math, reading, writing).	26%	1.5
B. How the child interacts with staff and other students.	27%	1.5
C. What classes and activities the child is in.	21%	3.5
D. Things you can do at home to reinforce learning experiences.	19%	3.5
E. Other.	7%	5

Table FS-7 below indicates that parents feel that a parent-teacher face-to-face conference is the best way to get that individual information. In lieu of conferences, written reports, school visits and home visits by school personnel received almost equal preference. In "other" ways, parents commented that students should be included in parent-teacher conferences and that the best way was for the parent to keep eyes and ears open and get to know Free School staff and students.

Table FS-7. Ways of Getting Progress Information.

What way is best for you to get that information? Rank these ways in order of preference.	Votes	Rank
1. At parent-teacher conferences	24%	1
2. At home visits from the child's advisor.	19%	2
3. By visiting school.	19%	2
4. In written reports from the advisor.	20%	2
5. From the student.	17%	2
6. Other.	2%	3

Further, Table FS-8 indicates that among supplemental kinds of information, descriptions of classes and activities would be the most preferred. Equal second preference is given descriptions of typical daily occupations, group-progress reports, and personnel descriptions. Other information mentioned included:

- staff consistency in expectations: limitations and enforcement of such
- honest description of atmosphere, educational priorities as perceived by staff
- exact evaluation of whether claimed activities really happen
- if students go everyday you send them

It was also noted that a significantly higher proportion of secondary student parents desire more information on reading and math progress than do the elementary children's parents.

Table FS-8. Additional Information Preferences.

What additional information about the school do you want? Rank the following:	Votes	Rank
A. Descriptions of activities and classes offered.	26%	1
B. Progress reports in reading and math by age group.	18%	3
C. Description of a typical day for primary, middle and secondary students	18%	3
D. Descriptions of the staff.	20%	3
E. Description of daily activities of randomly selected students. (Not done by name)	15%	5
F. Other	3%	6

Decision-Making

Parents perceive that individual staff members have considerable autonomy in making day-to-day decisions at the Free School. (See Table FS-9.) Secondly, it sees the staff cabinet having lesser involvement in this kind of decision and the principal, governing board and student groups as having the least direct involvement in these day-to-day decisions. It is recognized that as decision-making situations impinge more and more upon individuals or groups, the more those individuals or groups tend to be involved.

Table FS-9. Daily decisions.

How do you think most day-to-day decisions are made at the Free School? (These include: field trips, use of space in the school, handling of discipline problems, etc.)	
	6% The Governing Board
	8% The Principal
	16% The staff cabinet
	52% Individual staff members
	8% Groups of students
	10% No response

There was no strong feeling as to what specific changes are needed (if any) in the composition of the Free School Governing Board. Almost equal numbers said that it needs more students, more parents, it is OK or were unsure. Some other responses are listed below Table FS-10 .

Table FS-10. Changes Needed in Governing Board.

What changes are needed in the composition of the Governing Board?	20% Needs more students
	- Needs more staff
	18% Needs more parents
	16% It is OK now
	26% Other* (see below)
	20% No response

* Parent Comments on FS Governing Board Changes Needed

- Change it any way you please. It needs to be given power (in reality, not make believe.) Note at bottom: I think the person who designed this is trying to prove something.
- Needs less staff.
- Less parents (?)
- What do you mean by compos f the governing board?
- I thought it was just char
- Ought to be abolished in favor of summerhillian democratic general family meetings.
- I don't know what the governing board does or staff cabinet is.
- More information from grade school students.
- Decisions of Governing Board final rather than principal or administration.
- Better representation of and accountability to Free School community and community ideas.
- Just needs leadership and direction.

Data in Table FS-11 indicate that a majority of parents are not sufficiently knowledgeable to make a judgement about whether destructive acts against people and property have declined over this school year at the Free School. The minority who offered a judgement apparently had no reason from their experience to contradict the report.

FS-11. Behavior Perceptions.		
The Free School mid-year evaluation report states that deliberate and destructive acts against people and property have declined in number since the beginning of the year. Do you agree?	Yes	38%
	No	6%
	Uncertain	56%

Parent Satisfaction Ratings

Parents supplied ratings indicating the degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction they felt with twelve areas of the Free School's curriculum. The areas and results appear in Table FS-12 below. Overall, satisfaction with the job the Free School is doing in these areas outweighed dissatisfaction by 2 to 1.

Generally, too, there was uncertainty among one of five parents as to how to rule these areas. Greatest satisfaction, however, was expressed with the job that the Free School is doing in encouraging creativity. The teaching of math; developing self-expression through art, music, writing, etc.; and expanding learning opportunities by using the community resources received equal second-highest ratings of satisfaction. The remaining areas received almost equal positive ratings. Teaching of critical thinking, promoting responsibility and teaching basic skills in new and creative ways are areas in which there is greatest uncertainty.

Table FS-12. Parent Satisfaction with Free School.

Use this scale of satisfaction to indicate how you feel about what the Free School is doing in:	Very Satisfied %	Satisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Very Dissatisfied %	Uncertain %
A. Teaching language arts (reading, writing, listening, speaking).	14	34	26	8	18
B. Teaching math.	20	40	14	6	20
C. Teaching critical thinking.	8	38	16	10	28
D. Developing skills of self-expression through art, music, writing, etc.	18	44	28	2	8
E. Helping students to understand self.	16	42	18	4	20
F. Encouraging creativity.	36	38	10	2	14
G. Teaching how to get along with others.	22	34	14	12	18
H. Promoting responsibility for one's own behavior.	20	32	16	12	20
I. Promoting responsibility for one's own education.	16	26	22	10	26
J. Finding new and creative ways to teach basic skills.	12	28	22	8	30
K. Expanding learning opportunities by using community sites and resources and decreasing the amount of time spent in the school building.	24	36	10	10	20
L. Informing parents about student's progress.	12	38	18	20	12

(N = 73)

There were no significant differences in the way elementary-pupil parents rated these over the way parents of secondary students rated them except in Area E where the elementary-pupil parents were more positive about help given students to understand self.

Graduation Requirements

The Free School's graduation requirements were mailed to all families in the spring of 1972. Parents were asked to rate them and the results appear below:

Table FS-13. Graduation Requirements.

Free School graduation requirements were mailed to all families in spring, 1972. How do you rate these requirements?	Too academic and traditional	--
	Not academic and traditional enough	6%
	About right	40%
	Uncertain	36%
	Further comments	18%

A large percentage were uncertain how to respond to this question. Two-thirds (12%) of the "further comments" stated they had not received copies of the graduation requirements.

Free School Parent Comments

The final question requested parents to state any comments, changes or additions they would like to see at the Free School. About two-thirds of the respondents made a total of 44 comments categorized as follows:

Table FS-14. Parent's Comments: Categories and Number.

	N
Curriculum and instruction (what is taught and how, organization)	20
Communications (home-school), progress reporting	5
Personnel (staff, teachers)	9
Discipline	5
Parent involvement	2
Effect of program on parent, student	2
Other	1

The comments have been transcribed, and copies delivered to the Free School for their study along with the data in this report.